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## Notes on some genera and subgenera of rails (Rallidae)

by John Penhallurick

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For some years I have been compiling a database of the "unabbreviated" first occurrence of every generic, subgeneric, specific and subspecific name applied to birds since Linnaeus (1758), but also including pre-Linnean names, and early vernacular names where these served as the basis for later scientific names. I mention "unabbreviated" because a major problem in many nineteenth-century works is the use of abbreviations for both the names of authors and the titles of both monographs and periodicals. For example, "Bp. *Consp. Vol. Zygod.* p. 7 (1854)" or "Forst. *Descr. Anim.* p. 151. (1844)". The former is: Bonaparte, 1854, "Conspectus Volucrum Zygodactylorum" in *Ateneo Italiano*, 2, p. 7; and the latter: J. R. Forster, 1844,

*Descriptiones animalium quae in itinere ad Maris australis terras per annos 1772, 1773, 1774 suscepto collegit*, ed. M. C. H. Lichtenstein, p. 15. While working through the Rallidae, I became aware of a number of problems relating to the availability and application of several generic and subgeneric names, including several incorrect type statements. As Steven Gregory has accurately stated, in a review of an earlier draft of this paper: "The Rallidae is a veritable minefield for the unwary, the more so as it is very often difficult to ascertain with confidence that when names are used by nineteenth century authors, they are in fact referring to the same taxa." In addition to the historical problems, recent work, including studies utilising DNA sequencing, suggests that there should be some significant realignments of species among genera. Accordingly, this paper discusses the availability, typification and validity of a number of generic and subgeneric names among the Rallidae. It also proposes a new name in relation to the genus *Sarothrura*.

### ***Corethrura* G. R. Gray, 1846 and *Sarothrura* Heine & Reichenow, 1890**

*Corethrura* is often encountered in nineteenth-century synonymies as a generic name relating to small rails. More recently, Wolters (1975-82: 14) listed *Corethrura* G. R. Gray, 1846 as a genus containing *C. paykulli* (Ljungh, 1813) Band-bellied Crake; *C. fusca* (Linnaeus, 1766) Ruddy-breasted Crake; and the extinct *C. sandwichensis* (J. F. Gmelin, 1789) Hawaiian Crake, all usually assigned to *Porzana* Vieillot, 1816. To judge from the standard references, its origins are obscure. It is curious that R. B. Sharpe (1894: 115), who used *Corethrura* as a genus, cited only:

*Corethrura Reichenb*, *Syst. Av.* [= Reichenbach, 1849, *Avium systema naturale*, date for pl. 21 from Zimmer (1926, p. 510)], tab. xxi, figs. 1-4 (1845? descr. nullâ).

Reichenbach figured *Corethrura jardinei* = *Gallinula jardinei* A. Smith, 1839 [= *Crex affinis* A. Smith, 1828] as the type. There is, as Sharpe's citation indicates, no description, but under ICZN 12. 2. 5 the reference to Smith's name is sufficient to serve as an "indication" for a name published before 1931.

However, *Corethrura* Reichenbach, 1849 is preoccupied by *Corethrura* G. R. Gray, 1846, *The genera of birds*, 3, p. 595, as noted by Ripley (1977: 167). Gray gave a full description and listed 31 species; he also figured the head of *Corethrura rubiginosa* = *Rallus rubiginosus* Temminck, 1825 = *Rallus fuscus* Linnaeus, 1766 as the typical species. Interestingly, Gray follows the name *Corethrura* with "Reich.\*" and the footnote "\*" stated "Established by M. Reichenbach in 184-? Rallina of the same author is synonymous." However, as far as I can discover, this must refer to an unpublished name of Reichenbach's. This makes *Corethrura* G. R. Gray, 1846 a junior synonym of *Porzana* Vieillot, 1816, which has "Marouette" of Buffon = *Rallus porzana* Linnaeus, 1766, Spotted Crake as its type.

But both Gray's and Reichenbach's names appear to be preoccupied by:

*Corethrura* Hope, 1843, *Transactions of the Linnean Society of London*, 19 (3), p. 135. (Hemiptera)

In other words, the name *Corethrura* appears to be unavailable as a generic or subgeneric name for birds. The next available name to replace *Corethrura* G. R. Gray, 1846, as a subgeneric name including *P. paykulli*, *P. fusca* and *P. sandwichensis* appears to be *Limnobaenus* Sundevall, 1872, *Methodi naturalis avium disponendarum tentamen*, p. 130, with type, by subsequent designation (R. B. Sharpe, 1894, *Catalogue of the birds in the British Museum*, 23, *Fulicariae* and *Alectorides*, p. 145) *Rallus fuscus* Linnaeus, 1766. Sharpe (1894: 145 -150) listed *Limnobaenus* as a genus including *L. fusca*; *L. phaeopygus* [= *P. fusca phaeopyga* Stejneger, 1887]; *L. paykulli* and *L. suahelensis* (Tristram, 1882) [= *Porzana marginalis* Hartlaub, 1857].

After the citation for *Corethrura* Reichenbach, [1845? = 1849] discussed above, Sharpe (1894: 115) also listed:

*Sarothrura* Heine & Reichen., *Nomencl. Mus. Hein.* [= Heine, 1890, in Heine & Reichenow, *Nomenclator Musei Heineani Ornithologici*] p. 319. (1890; nom. emend.)

with the type listed as *C. rufa* i.e. *Rallus rufus* Vieillot, 1819. Peters (1934: 194), on the other hand, stated "New name for *Corethrura* Reichenbach, 1853 (not *Corethrura* Gray, 1846). Type, by original designation, *Gallinula jardinei* A. Smith, [1839] = *Alethelia lineata* Swainson [1838] [= *Crex affinis* A. Smith, 1828]", a typification which is reproduced by Ripley (1977: 167). It appears that Peters derived this typification from W. L. Sclater (1924: 104), who stated after *Sarothrura* Heine, 1888 [sic!] "nom. nov. pro *Corethrura* Reichb. 1853, nec Gray, 1846. Type by original designation, *Gallinula jardinei* = *Alethelia lineata* Swainson. W. L. Sclater placed *ayresi* in *Coturnicops*, following the original describer, Gurney, 1877, but retained all the other Flufftails in *Sarothrura*. (1924: 104 - 107)

In fact, Heine (1890: 319) listed only "1. dimidiata (Temm.)." and did not mention either *Corethrura* Reichenbach, 1849 or *Corethrura* G. R. Gray, 1846. In Sharpe (1894: 121), we find in the synonymy of *Corethrura rufa*: "*Porzana dimidiata*, Temm.[inck] (ubi?), *Less.[on] Traité d'Orn.[ithologie]* p. 537 (1831)." This is a junior synonym of *Rallus rufus* Vieillot, 1819. As in the case of *Corethrura* Reichenbach, 1849, there is no description, but under ICZN 12. 2. 5, the reference to "dimidiata (Temm.)" is sufficient to serve as an "indication" for a name published before 1931.

Michael Walters has kindly pointed out to me (pers. comm., 8 March 2002) that further light is cast by a footnote in Sharpe's *Handlist* (1899: Vol. 1, p.103):

Dr. Reichenow (*Orn[ithologische] M.[itteilungen] B.[erlin]* iv, p. 4, 1896) suggests the restitution of *Sarothrura* of Heine (*Nomencl. Mus. Heine.*, p. 319) in place of *Corethrura* Reichenbach, as the first mention of the latter genus occurs in Gray's *Genera of Birds*, in 1846. In 1852 Reichenbach figured, as the type of his genus *Corethrura*, *C. jardinei* (= *C. lineata*); but as Gray in 1846 had previously given a full description of "*Corethrura*, Reichenbach"

and figured the head of *C. rubiginosa* [pl.161. fig 7 = *Limnobaenus fuscus* (Linn.)] as the typical species, Dr. Reichenow's suggestion will have to be adopted.

It appears that W. L. Sclater (1924), and following him Peters (1934), have misinterpreted this footnote as indicating that *Sarothrura* Heine, 1890 is a nomen novum for *Corethrura* Reichenbach, 1849. However, such a treatment is unjustified, as Heine (1890) made no such indication, and further the type of Heine's name was not included among the species listed under *Corethrura* Reichenbach, 1849. Thus the correct citation for *Sarothrura* is:

*Sarothrura* Heine 1890, in Heine & Reichenow, *Nomenclator Musei Heineani Ornithologici*, p. 319. Type, by monotypy, "*dimidiata* (Temm.)" = *Porzana dimidiata* Lesson, 1831 = *Rallus rufus* Vieillot, 1819.

Neave (1940: Vol. 4, p. 114) indicated that *Sarothrura* Heine, 1890, is also itself preoccupied by

*Sarothrura* Hasselt, 1823, *Algemeene Konst- en Letterbode*, (20), p. 317. (Pisces).

I am aware of only one other available name relating to birds hitherto placed in the genus *Sarothrura*:

*Lemurolimnas* Salomonsen, 1934, *Ibis*, p. 338. Type, by original designation, *Zapornia watersi* Bartlett, 1879 [= 1880].

It happens that this name applies to what is apparently the most deviant member of the group, *S. watersi*, Slender-billed Flufftail. Salomonsen characterised the proposed genus as follows:

Description. - Nearest to *Sarothrura* Heine, but differing in the following points:-

1. Bill much finer and thinner (height at base less than third of length of bill; in all *Sarothrura* between half and third of length of bill).
2. Nostrils longer and quite horizontal; in *Sarothrura* somewhat oblique.
3. Wing more pointed (distance between longest primary and first (shortest) secondary much greater than in any species of *Sarothrura*; first primary of the same length as first secondary being much - as a rule about 10 mm. - shorter).
4. Tarsus much shorter than middle toe (minus claw); in *Sarothrura* tarsus is longer than middle toe, or of equal size, or a trifle shorter.
5. Tail-feathers not so fluffy, of a more solid construction.
6. The characteristic white or yellow dots which are found in all *Sarothrura* are absent, both male and female being plain-coloured on the upperparts, the male resembling *Porzana fusca*. (1934: 388-89)

It should be said immediately that a major problem with *S. watersi* is the extreme rarity of the species; and presumably, the lack of material has inhibited adequate study of this taxon. The sixth character may not be wholly accurate, as Taylor (1996: 146) said of the **immature** female *watersi*: "...duller than adult, with small white



spots scattered over upperparts, wings and sides of breast.” But according to the same account, the adult male and female lack the prominent spotting or streaking characteristic of all other Flufftails, including *S. ayresi* (Gurney, 1877) White-winged Flufftail, which, according to Taylor (1996: 145), forms a species pair with *S. watersi*. The figure of the female *watersi* in plate 9 opposite p. 143 does show white spots and appears to represent not the female, as indicated, but the immature female.

Ripley (1977: 167-185), who lumped all of the Flufftails in *Coturnicops* G. R. Gray, 1855, together with *Mycropygia schomburgkii* (Schomburgk, 1848) Ocellated Crake, merely listed *Lemurolimnas* in the synonymy of *Coturnicops* without any comment on the possible distinctness of *watersi*. Also, Salomonsen (1934) is not listed in the “Literature cited”. Taylor (1996: 109), who generally followed the taxonomic treatment of Olson (1973), did not mention any possible distinctions among the Flufftails in his discussion of systematics, and assigned all of the Flufftails to *Sarothrura*. As noted above, he treated *S. ayresi* as a species pair with *S. watersi*. Taylor (1998) followed the (1996) analysis and, like the earlier account, did not mention Salomonsen (1934) in the general references or bibliography.

It is likely that the reason why Taylor (1996 & 1998) did not refer to Salomonsen’s *Lemurolimnas* is the same as his reason for linking *S. ayresi* with *S. watersi*: namely that he relied on the review of the genus *Sarothrura* by Keith *et al.* (1970). Those authors stated:

Salomonsen (1934, p.388) has proposed a separate genus, *Lemurolimnas*, for *S. watersi*, on the basis of certain structural peculiarities, although we agree with Rand (1936, p. 361) that this does not seem necessary. Such peculiarities as there are *may be the result of long isolation of watersi in Malagasy* [sic!, emphasis added] although it may be relatively close to *ayresi*, as discussed in the section on phylogeny. See pp. 71 - 73. The summary of measurements for the individual species in *Sarothrura* (table 2) does not suggest any unduly striking peculiarity. Nor do Salomonsen’s own figures, apart from the increase in distance in *watersi* between the longest primary and shortest secondary, and the length of the first primary in relation to the secondaries. It is also true that the nostrils are much longer than in *ayresi*, for example, and that the tail is of relatively solid construction. But as regards the latter character, it would appear that in *pulchra*, *affinis*, and *insularis* the tail is little less solid. According to the findings in the section on phylogeny, this character thus appears in three out of our four groups and therefore may not be significant. As to the plain color of the upper side, it would seem that markings *have been lost in the course of isolation* [sic! Emphasis added] Some females do show traces of spotting. Thus we feel that the systematics situation is best reflected by retaining *watersi* in *Sarothrura*. (1970: 69)

This passage has been quoted at some length because it represents the supposedly definitive statement on the relationship between *watersi* and other members of the genus. Attention needs to be drawn, first, to the appeal to the “ *long isolation of*

*watersi*” as a catch-all dismissal of differences between that species and other members of *Sarothrura*. “Long isolations” lead to genetic divergence, which is the basis of separation into distinct species and genera, which is supposedly the issue here. As for the statement that “The summary of measurements for the individual species in *Sarothrura* (table 2) does not suggest any unduly striking peculiarity”: the only measurement which appears relevant to Salomonsen’s criteria is the ratio of tarsus to middle toe. Using the figures of Keith *et al.* (1970: 9), the middle toe measurement of *watersi* (32 mm) is the only species with a measurement over 30 mm, except for *S. p. pulchra* and *centralis*, also 32 mm. But the tarsus measurement of the latter species is 29 mm, while that of *watersi* is 22 mm. Surely these measurements support Salomonsen’s claim.

Keith *et al.* (1970) conceded point 3 of Salomonsen’s criteria. They also conceded the difference in nostrils (point 2), at least in relation to *S. ayresi*. They did not address Salomonsen’s first point, which related to the ratio between height and length of the bill at all, although they stated, in the section on “Possible phylogeny”: “*Sarothrura watersi* has an unusually long fine bill; measurements show it to be much longer than in *ayresi*, or in the sympatric *insularis*” (1970: 71). They disputed point 5 about tail structure. In relation to point 6, the lack of white or yellow dots or streaks found in all other members of *Sarothrura*, they stated (1970: 69) “Some females do show traces of spotting.” More recent descriptions (see above) indicate that it is only immature females that show such spots. Adult *watersi* do not show any of the white or yellow spots and streaking so prominent in all other members of the genus.

In short, we do not feel that Keith *et al.* (1970) have, in fact, refuted Salomonsen’s proposed criteria. A further issue that has emerged since Keith *et al.* (1970) is the calls of *S. watersi*, first described in Wilmé & Langrand (1989): “The vocalizations of *S. watersi* differ considerably from those of all other *Sarothrura*. *S. watersi* is the only member of the genus known to utilise only non-resonant (rapidly muted) components. The call covers a wide range of frequencies and is relatively brief. Nevertheless, the longest notes and those with the highest energy in *S. watersi* are at low frequencies.” (1989: 219) Taylor (1998: 176) cited evidence from A. Riley (in litt. to Taylor) who “describes the three-note call as a loud *chang chang chang*. A 2-note version sometimes precedes the 3-note calls and has the first syllable accentuated *GOO goo*, and longer series of 4-7 note are occasionally heard; notes vary in pitch. The alarm call is a characteristic *tiec*.” Wilmé & Langrand stated that playback of their call attracted an individual to within 1 m of the speaker, while emitting its own calling response (1989: 218) With either description, the call of *watersi* appears to separate it from all other flufftails. König *et al.* (1999: 33 - 35) argued the importance of calls as a fundamental mechanism of genetic isolation in relation to owls, as primarily nocturnal birds. A similar argument can be made for voice as an isolating mechanism in rails, which generally operate in conditions of poor visibility.

It is also worth discussing the linkage of *watersi* and *ayresi* in a superspecies, which stems from Keith *et al.* (1970) and is followed by Taylor (1996 and 1998),

which would contradict our endorsement of Salomonsen's (1934) separation of *watersi* under *Lemurolimnas*. Keith *et al.* (1970: 71) began by stating: "...*ayresi* and *watersi* seem fairly closely related, despite the absence in the latter of white on the secondaries and almost so of any pattern on the mantle and wing coverts [sic! Emphasis added], although some females do show a little vestigial spotting." It was pointed out above that this appears to be a feature of only immature females. They continued: "The affinity between the two is perhaps best shown on the tail. In males, *ayresi* is barred with black, in *watersi*, there are black tips." But barring similar to that in male *ayresi* occurs in the tail of male *S. elegans*, Buff-spotted Flufftail, and in the tail of female *S. affinis*, Striped Flufftail; and *watersi* displays black tips, not black barring. The loss of spotting in *watersi* is said to be "probably the result of prolonged isolation". I have already emphasised the flaws in appealing to "prolonged isolation" as a reason why one should ignore differences between taxa. The data in Keith *et al.*'s Table 2 (1970: 9):

	Wing	Culmen	Tarsus	Middle Toe
<i>S. ayresi</i>	76	13	18	26
<i>S. watersi</i>	72	16	22	32

certainly do not suggest any close relationship between the two taxa. Overall, I am puzzled as to why Keith *et al.* (1970) claimed that these two taxa should be treated as "sister species". Only one piece of evidence is offered in favour, although on closer examination, the black barring on the tail does not uniquely unite *ayresi* and *watersi*; and in fact, *watersi* has black tips, not black barring. In conclusion, nothing in the review of *Sarothrura* by Keith *et al.* (1970) is convincing in arguing either for the treatment of *ayresi* and *watersi* as a species pair, or against the separation of *watersi* from other flufftails.

Wolters, who treated *Lemurolimnas* as a monotypic subgenus, commented: "*Lemurolimnas* ist vielleicht als eigenes Genus zu führen." [i. e. "*Lemurolimnas* should possibly be treated as a monotypic genus."] (1975-82: 11). I believe that Salomonsen's assignation of *watersi* to its own genus *Lemurolimnas* is correct, in that of the characteristics he describes, characters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, plus voice, do appear to distinguish *watersi* sufficiently from all other Flufftails to justify its assignation to a distinct genus. (One would like to have DNA sequences to confirm this proposal, but the chances of obtaining material from the Slender-billed Flufftail must be vanishingly small.) Accordingly, a new generic name is needed for the remainder of the species formerly assigned to *Sarothrura*. (In any case, a new subgeneric name is needed if *Lemurolinas* represents a monotypic nominal subgenus.) I propose

***Daseioura* nom. nov.** for *Sarothrura* Heine & Reichenow, 1890, not

*Sarothrura* Hasselt, 1823 (Pisces). Type species: *Rallus rufus* Vieillot, 1819, of which "dimidiata Temm." of Heine, 1890 = *Porzana dimidiata* Lesson, 1831 is a junior synonym.

Etymology: based on Greek δασύς “hairy, shaggy”, fem. δασεῖς, an adjective used of birds in Theophrastus, *Fragmenta*, 180; and οὐρα “tail”, and represents a rough translation of the English name “Flufftail”. Gender: Feminine. I am aware of the existence of *Dasyurus* Geoffroy, 1796, and *Dasyuris* Guenée, 1868 but under ICZN 56.2 “One-letter difference”, these do not appear to pre-occupy the proposed name *Daseioura*.

We thus have:

*Daseioura pulchra* (J. E. Gray, 1829) White-spotted Flufftail with subspecies *D. p. pulchra*; *D. p. zenkeri* (Neumann, 1908); *D. p. batesi* (Bannerman, 1922); and *D. p. centralis* (Neumann, 1908)

*Daseioura elegans* (A. Smith, 1839) Buff-spotted Flufftail with subspecies *D. e. reichenovi* (Sharpe, 1894); and *D. e. elegans*.

*Daseioura rufa* (Vieillot, 1819) Red-chested Flufftail with subspecies *D. r. bonapartii* (Bonaparte, 1856); *D. r. elizabethae* (van Sommeren, 1919); and *D. r. rufa*.

*Daseioura lugens* Böhm, 1884 Long-toed Flufftail with subspecies *D. l. lugens*; and *D. l. lynesi* (Grant & Mackworth-Praed, 1934).

*Daseioura boehmi* (Reichenow, 1900) Streaky-breasted Flufftail.

*Daseioura affinis* (A. Smith, 1828) Striped Flufftail with subspecies *D. a. antonii* (Madaráz & Neumann, 1911); and *D. a. affinis*.

*Daseioura insularis* (Sharpe, 1870) Madagascar Flufftail.

*Daseioura ayresi* White-winged Flufftail.

*Lemurolimnas watersi* (Bartlett, 1890). Slender-billed Flufftail.

### ***Ortygonax* Heine, 1890**

Wolters (1975-82: 13) treated *Ortygonax* Heine, 1890, as a subgenus of *Pardirallus* Bonaparte, 1856, containing the species *P. nigricans* (Vieillot, 1819) Blackish Rail, and *P. sanguinolentus* (Swainson, 1837) Plumbeous Rail. The citation for *Ortygonax* given by Peters (1934: 168-169), who also treated it as a valid genus containing the two species just mentioned, is:

*Ortygonax* Heine, in Heine and Reichenow, [*Nomenclator Musei Heineani Ornithologici*], 1890, p. 321. Type, by subsequent designation *Rallus rytirhynchos* Vieillot (Sharpe, Cat. Bds. Brit. Mus., 23, 1894, p.27.)

*Rallus rytirhynchos* Vieillot 1819 was based on “Ypacahá pardo” of Azara (1805: 220) of Paraguay. Zimmer (1930: 251) listed *Rallus rytirhynchos* Vieillot as indeterminable. Peters (1934: 168, footnote 1) stated “*Rallus rytirhynchos* Vieillot seems to me to be identifiable as this species, and not unidentifiable as claimed by Zimmer...”. However, Hellmayr & Conover (1942: 319, footnote 1) put the matter beyond doubt: “...Azara’s description refers to three immature birds and is of very



doubtful applicability...In view of the uncertainty surrounding Vieillot's name, which might just as well have been based on immature individuals of *R. nigricans* likewise found in Paraguay, it is preferable to use Swainson's term, whose type still exists and leaves no possible doubt as to its pertinence." Taylor (1996: 193) concurred in treating Vieillot's name as "unidentifiable". This leaves Sharpe's (1894) designation of a type of *Rallus rytirhynchos* Vieillot 1819 for *Ortygonax* Heine 1890 as invalid. Accordingly, I hereby designate *Rallus sanguinolentus* Swainson, 1838 as the type species of *Ortygonax* Heine 1890.

### **Anurolimnas Sharpe 1893 and Rufirallus Bonaparte 1856**

Taylor (1996: 109) stated: "This work follows the taxonomic treatment of Olson [1973], modified in some cases by more recent morphological studies." Accordingly, he assigned *Porzana castaneiceps* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1868 [= *Anurolimnas castaneiceps*] Chestnut-headed Crake; *Rallus viridis* P. L. S. Müller, 1776 [= *A. viridis*] Russet-crowned Crake; and *Porzana fasciata* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1867 [= *A. fasciatus*] Black-banded Crake to the genus *Anurolimnas* Sharpe, 1893, the type of which is *Porzana castaneiceps* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1868 (1996: 56). Peters had previously assigned *castaneiceps* to *Anurolimnas* (1934: 181), but placed *viridis* and *hauxwelli* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1868 [= *Porzana fasciata* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1867] in *Laterallus* G. R. Gray, 1855 (1934: 191-92).

If all three species are judged to be congeneric, then the name *Rufirallus* Bonaparte, 1856 appears to have priority over *Anurolimnas* Sharpe, 1893. Wolters (1975-82: 10) did assign *viridis* to this genus, together with *Corethrura rubra* P. L. Sclater & Salvin 1860 [= *Laterallus ruber*], Ruddy Crake; and *Porzana levraudi* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1868 [= *L. levraudi*], Rusty-flanked Crake, the latter two normally being placed in *Laterallus*. However, Wolters placed *fasciatus* and *castaneiceps* in *Anurolimnas*. Bonaparte did not designate a type under *Rufirallus*, but listed three species, together with synonyms:

339. *cayanensis*, L.[inneus]. (*Rallus*)

(*G. ruficollis*, Sw.[ainson]) [= *Gallinula ruficollis* Swainson, 1838 = *Laterallus exilis* (Temminck, 1831)] *plicatus* Wied. [18\_?] *kiolo* Vieill. [= *Rallus kiolo* Vieillot, 1819]

340. *boeckii*, Bo. Mus. Berol. [= *Rufirallus boeckii* Bonaparte, 1856 = *Rallus concolor* Gosse, 1847, now placed in *Amaurolimnas* Sharpe, 1893]

341 *castaneus*, Cuv.[ier] [= *Rallus castaneus* Lesson (ex Cuvier MS), 1831 no description and hence nomen nudum = *Rallus concolor* Gosse, 1847] *concolor*? Gosse

*rufipennis*? Gr. [= *Rallus rufopennis* G. R. Gray 1844 no description hence nomen nudum = *Rallus antarcticus* King, 1828.]

A type for *Rufirallus* Bonaparte, 1856 was subsequently designated by P. L. Sclater & Salvin (1868: 450) as *Rallus cayennensis* J. F. Gmelin 1789 = *Rallus*

*cayanensis* Boddaert, 1783 = *Rallus viridis* P. L. S. Müller 1776. P. L. Sclater & Salvin included in *Rufirallus*: *Porzana cayanensis* (Gm.), *Porzana levraudi* sp. nov., *Porzana rubra* P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1860, *Porzana concolor* (Gosse, 1847) and *Porzana castaneiceps* sp. nov.

More recently, Ridgely & Greenfield (2001), contra Olson (1973), have returned *fasciatus* and *viridis* to *Laterallus* on the grounds that, "Information obtained subsequently concerning their vocalizations appears clearly to place both in the genus *Laterallus*, where they traditionally have been classified (e.g. Meyer de Schauensee 1966, 1970)." (2001: 200). However, under *Laterallus viridis*, Ridgely & Greenfield stated further: "Sick (1993) suggested that this species may merit generic separation in the monotypic genus *Rufirallus*, and indeed it does seem distinct from other *Laterallus* species." (2001: 200). What Sick actually said is:

Unusual among rallids in its adaptation to dry environments...In completely dry fields of thatching grass or brush, frequently far from water (e.g., on hills below Sugar Loaf in Rio de Janeiro)...It has been proposed to place it in a separate genus, *Rufirallus*, in consideration of its special form of molt and color of its eggs. Together with *L. fasciatus* it could be included in genus *Amaurolimnas*. See *Micropygia schomburgkii*, which also lives far from water. (1993: 213)

In the section on "Breeding" of the chapter on *Rallidae*, Sick stated that "...unlike other rail species, both *L. viridis* and *L. leucopyrrhus* have pure white eggs..." (1993: 210). If Sick's suggestion is accepted, we would end up with *Laterallus fasciatus* (P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1867); *Rufirallus viridis* (P. L. S. Müller, 1776); and *Anurolimnas castaneiceps* (P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1868).

More recently still, Storrs Olson (pers. comm., 2001) has informed me that "A preliminary molecular phylogeny developed by Beth Slikas has *castaneiceps* as a sister group of what is usually included in *Laterallus* plus *Coturnicops* and *P. flaviventer* [Yellow-breasted Crake]. A group consisting of *fasciatus*, *viridis*, and *leucopyrrhus* [Vieillot, 1819] [Red-and-white Crake, currently assigned to *Laterallus*] is sister to the preceding group, and if this stands, *Rufirallus* could be used for these three species." If this analysis is substantiated, it would lead to a necessity to choose between *Coturnicops* G. R. Gray, 1855 and *Laterallus* G. R. Gray, 1855 for the first group. These names occur on the same page. As both names occur on the same page, I choose *Laterallus* G. R. Gray, 1855. Thus we would have, in addition to the 10 species currently in *Laterallus*:

*Laterallus exquisitus* (Swinhoe, 1873) Swinhoe's Rail.

*Laterallus noveboracensis* (J. F. Gmelin, 1789) Yellow Rail

*Laterallus notatus* (Gould, 1841) Speckled Rail

*Laterallus flaviventer* (Boddaert, 1783) Yellow-breasted Rail

*Anurolimnas castaneiceps* (P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1868) Chestnut-headed  
Crake

*Rufirallus viridis* (P. L. S. Müller, 1776) Russet-crowned Crake

*Rufirallus fasciatus* (P. L. Sclater & Salvin, 1867) Black-banded Crake

*Rufirallus leucopyrrhus* (Vieillot, 1819) Red-and-white Crake

Whichever of these scenarios develops, it is clear that *Rufirallus* Bonaparte, 1856, will have to be resurrected, either in place of *Anurolimnas* Sharpe 1893, or in addition to that name.

### ***Ortygometra* auct.**

Anyone who looks at the synonymy of smaller rail species will inevitably come across the generic name *Ortygometra* in nineteenth-century citations. When I looked for the origin of this name, I found that it was not mentioned in any of the standard ornithological reference works (e.g. Sharpe, 1894; Hartert, 1921; Peters, 1934; Ridgway, 1941; Hellmayr & Conover, 1942). The earliest citation I could find (through its mention in the sources of Linnaeus (1758)) was:

*Ortygometra* Aldrovandus, 1603-81, *Ornithologiae, hoc est de Avibus Historiae*, libri XII, bk. 13, p. 23. referring to *Crex crex*.

Neave (1940: Vol. 3, p. 477), cited two sources. The first is "Moehring, 1752, 6, 63 (Nozem. & Vosm., 1758)". This is:

*Ortygometra* Nozeman & Vosmaer, 1758, *Geslachten der Vogelen...*, (Dutch Translation of Moehring, 1752, *Avium Genera*), 6, 63.

On page 6, we find we find the name in a mere listing of "Rank V", as γ *Ortygometra*. On page 63, as species number 85, we find "Kwartelkoning" (Dutch for "Corncrake") with references to Willughby's *Ornithology* (1678, page 122 and table 29) where Aldrovandus is cited. However, Nozeman & Vosmaer, 1758, *Geslachten der Vogelen*, was rejected by ICZN Opinion 241 for nomenclatural purposes because the names therein were not reinforced by adoption or acceptance. So clearly the name is not available from this source.

The second citation was Leach, 1816. That is:

*Ortygometra* Leach, 1816, *A Systematic Catalogue of the Specimens of the Indigenous Mammals and Birds in the British Museum*, p. 34.

Leach listed three items under *Ortygometra*:

*Ortygometra* *Crex* female. Corncrake female. Camarthenshire. G. Montague, Esq. *Ortygometra* *Maruetta*, male. Spotted Crake, male. Devonshire, G. Montagu, Esq. *Ortygometra* *Maruetta*, female. Spotted Crake female.

Although Leach, 1816, is not listed among the list of rejected works by the ICZN, Michael Walters (pers. comm.) states:

“Leach’s Catalogue of 1816 was not really a publication in the strict sense. It was most likely intended to be cut up as a series of labels for specimens in the collection.”

Later sources include:

*Octogometra* [sic!] E. Forster, 1817, *Catalogue Avium in Insulis Britannicis habitantium*, p. 27. Type, by monotypy, *Rallus crex* Linnaeus, 1758. Corrected to *Ortygometra*, p. 59.

I was alerted to this citation by Mathews (1927, p. 89). It is also included in Neave (1940). I also note as variant spellings *Ortygonometra* Griffith, 1829, *The animal kingdom...by the Baron Cuvier*, 8, p. 406; and *Ortygiometra* Streubel, 1842, in Ersch & Gruber, *Allgemeine Encyclopedie der Wissenschaft und Künste...*, (3), 16, p. 291. Not included in Neave (1940) is:

*Ortygometra* G. R. Gray, 1871, *Hand-list of the genera and species of birds ...in the British Museum*, 3, p.62, no. 2679

who credited the generic name to Linnaeus, 1744 and Leach, 1816. The genus as construed by him consists of several subgenera, including a. *Ortygometra*; b. *Porzana*; c. *Limnecorax*, d. *Zapornia*, e. *Thryorhina* and f. \_\_\_\_\_?, the last including *Alethelia* Sw.[ainson] 1837, *nec* Less.[on] 1826; *Corethrura* Reich.[enbach] 1853?; Reich.[enbach] S.[ystema] A.[vium] [=Avium systema naturale] t. 21 f. [unspecified]. The only species listed under subgenus *Ortygometra* is 10450 *crex* L. In conclusion, it appears that the correct citation for *Ortygometra* is:

*Ortygometra* E. Forster, 1817, *Catalogue Avium in Insulis Britannicis habitantium*, p. 59, corrected from *Octogometra*, p. 27. Type, by monotypy, *Rallus crex* Linnaeus, 1758.

which makes it a synonym of *Crex* Bechstein, 1803.

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